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The Hidden Cabin

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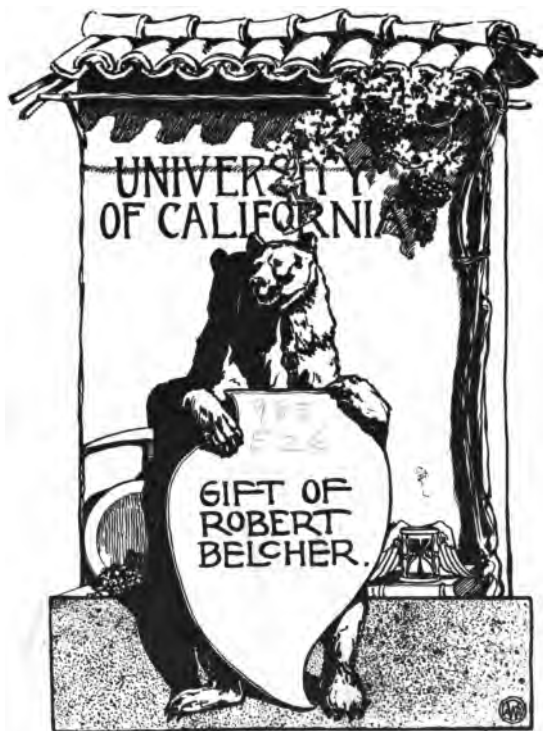
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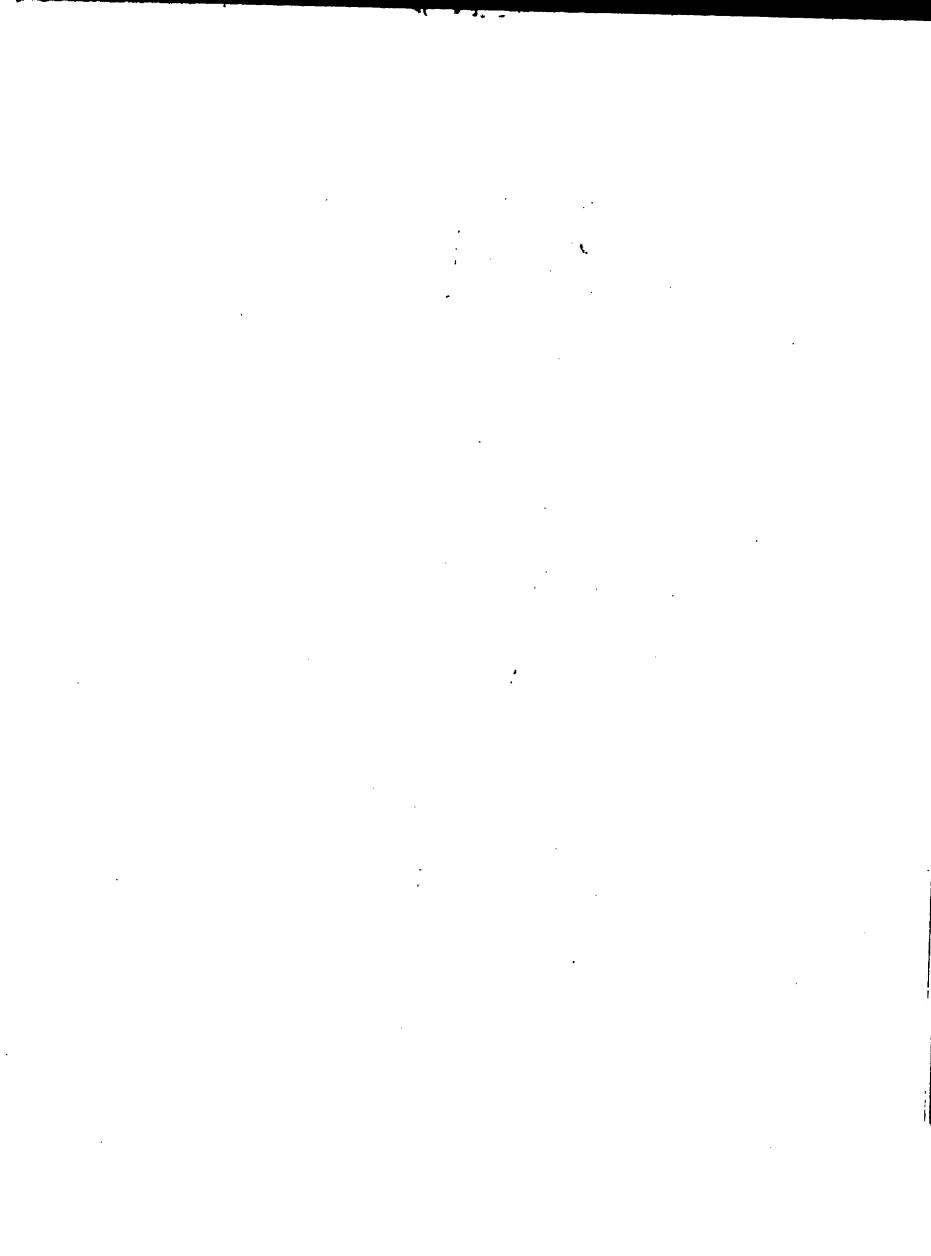


By David W. Edwards

JUN 3 1946

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THE HIDDEN CABIN



THE HIDDEN CABIN

A PATHETIC STORY

IN CONDENSED
FORM

BY
DAVID W. EDWARDS

AUTHOR OF "BILLY BIRDSALL,"
"UP THE GRADE," ETC.

COVER DESIGN, ZOLA AND ZIMBO
BY DRURY VICTOR HAIGHT



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THE STORY.

The Legend of Palomar.

The Hidden Cabin.

Cedric Vaughn.

Homer Lee.

Lola Vail.

The Voyage.

The Mines.

Ben Rubideaux.

The Wedding.

The Mystic Token.

The Stolen Child.

The Wanderers.

In the Mountains.

"Peg Leg," the Miner.

Gilbert.

Zola and Zimbo.

Gilbert's Journey.

Conclusion.

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THE HIDDEN CABIN

The life of Him who lived and died for love;
For love of those who loved and hated Him.

CEDRIC VAUGHN.

Classmates were Cedric Vaughn and Homer Lee.
Cedric from the southland came, and in his
Veins there flowed—tho' mixed with Anglo-Saxon—
A trace of Montezuma blood, the same
As that of those who met with sharpened steel
The hosts of Cortez on the bloody plains
Of Otumba. In the lightsome morning
Of his happy youth, he saw that twain who
Gave him life and love, with all his kindred,
By savage hands *struck down!* struck down and flung
Amid the blazing ruins of their home.
With superhuman strength he stood beside
His father 'till he fell; and then fought on
Like wounded tiger, grimly courting death.

Filled with pagan superstition, that wild
Robber chief—when he saw brave Cedric's blade
Cleave skull and flesh, and break like slender reeds
The spears of those who came upon him three

To one—thought him protected by the gods
And made immune to blows of mortal hands;
Stricken with fear lest in revengeful wrath
They turn on him, fell on his spear and died.
Then the others fled and Cedric's life was
Spared. He, wand'ring aimless o'er the waste
Scarce knowing where his footsteps led, came where
Terraced hills sloped to a narrow harbor.
He knew the place and knew his father had
Been well known there and much respected for
Fair dealing, when in trade he bought and sold;
Not many days before, they together
Had come down this dusty trail and returned
With family stores. Sadly he walked on, his
Poor heart bleeding at remembrance of those
Happy hours now gone, when suddenly he
Came upon the spot where they had rested
By a spring and led their horses down;
Here lay the branch his father's hand had used
To urge the horses on; and half trodden
In the mold, and scattered round, the paper
Which he had seen his mother's loving hands
Wrap 'round the food prepared by her for them.
Now, for the first, he realized his loss.

Upon the cold, damp bosom of the earth
He laid his head and wept—alone! Beneath
The bending skies and sighing boughs; no loving
Hand upon his brow; no ear to hear the
Groans that shook his iron frame; nor knew he
How near in that dark hour the heart of Him
Who suffered in the garden all alone
Was bending down to his. The soul may weep
And still the flesh demand its own: Too proud
To eat the bread of charity, he sought
And found employment in the mines. He worked
With heavy heart, crushed for a time by dark
Despair; and giving way to hunger for
Revenge, he well-nigh fell; but when at last
A kindly light broke thro' the gloom of his
Black night of grief, and he could say, "Thy will
Be done"; in him awoke new life and hope
And high resolve to make of his own life
A memorial to them; and to strive
To reach the measure of their highest hope.
To this end he hoarded all his earnings,
And with the salvage from the wreck of their
Estate, went bravely forth, determined to
Fulfill their wish so oft expres'd that he

Might go away to school—they named the school—
The greatest in the northland, whence they hoped
To see him come one day with cultured mind.

HOMER LEE.

Homer Lee was born and reared upon the
Sacred ground where beacon lights were kindl'd
On the hills, before the war that broke the
Chains of monarchy and set this nation
Free. His father owned ships and lands and
Merchandise; and the son—the eldest born—
Had never known a wish ungratified.
Albeit, he was not puffed up, or vain,
Or churlish by over-much indulgence,
For he was nurtured in the Quaker faith,
And early taught to draw the line 'twixt
Right and wrong; and measure men by what
They *are* and not by what they *have or say*.

Unlike in all respects were Cedric Vaughn
And Homer Lee, save in those noble traits
Of character which make men strong and brave
And true. Homer, lighter built and younger,

But noted for his prowess—when he met
The tall, dark, princely stranger from the south,
As by the power of some magnetic chain
Was strangely drawn to him. Touched by the kind
Demeanor of this fair-haired, happy youth,
Cedric's heart went out to him. So, as the
Years went by, between them grew a friendship
Strong as that of Pythias and his friend.

DORA LEE.

Homer's sister, Dora Lee, rejoiced at
Their success, or wept when disappointment
Crossed their path. Likewise, she shared in all their
Happy leisure hours, when sailing on the
Bay, or riding horseback o'er the hills. And
When their united strength their pennant saved,
The campus rang with shouts of victory
And plaudits for the heroes of the day,
She wept for joy. Dora Lee loved Cedric,
But he knew it not nor dreamed that she whose
Faithful heart could never love but one,
Had consecrated that one love to him.



Their college days were drawing to a close;
And nearer came the day when these two friends
Must each go out to meet the sterner life—
The one to fill the place prepared for him;
The other, empty handed and alone.
Their intercourse—to each a priceless boon—
Had ne'er been marred by shadow of distrust.
A diamond careless thrown upon the sand,
May change the gentle current of a stream.
And so it chanced the even current of
Their fellowship was broken.

LOLA VAIL.

Lola Vail,—

Her father, a rich planter, owned a vast
Estate upon the banks of that great stream
Which gathers up the waters of the land
And sweeps them onward to the gulf. Half way
To that strange southern land whence Cedric came
Was Lola born—a schoolmate, friend and guest
Of Dora Lee, and much like her; or as she
Would appear with three more years of summers'
Sun to paint with ruddier glow the bloom of

Health upon her cheek, and tint with deeper
Gold her ample braids; in purity of
Thought and loyalty, they also were alike.

Lola's mother died when she was young, and
Her father, bringing home a Creole wife,
Unwittingly neglected her; and thought
His duty done when he provided for
The child a nurse—an aged Octoroon—
A pious soul, who gave to Lola all
The love she knew in her sweet childhood life;
And filled the tender mind with holy thoughts
And pure. And Lola daily gathered flowers
And, weeping, laid them on her mother's grave.
When she was older grown, her father took
Her to the north, she and her faithful nurse,
To bide until she grew to womanhood.
Her education finished, her father
Called her home, but she begged to tarry, yet
A few more days and visit with her friend.

Thus it chanced to come about that Cedric
Vaughn and Homer Lee met sweet Lola Vail
And loved her, each in his own way—Cedric,

With all the fervor of his sincere soul—
And Homer worship'd her, forgetting for
The time his own betrothed. Cedric told her
All, she sitting by his side in shady
Bower, upon a wooded isle, their boat drawn
Up below upon the pebbly beach. He
Told the story of his life, as one a
Painful duty would perform. "She must know
The truth." And keeping nothing back, he told
Her of his birth and lineage—which was
Equal to her own—his loss of home and
Wealth; his lofty aspirations; high hopes
Now partly realized, though penniless;
But he was going back to that same land
Where he had delved; and there would he employ
The knowledge gained of placer, drift and ledge,
And engineering, to locate and bring
Forth rich treasure from the earth, and in a
Few short years would he return with wealth and
Build a costly home for her in some great
City,—she might name the place. "Could she love
Him? Would she wait for him?" She answered not
By spoken word, but when she lifted her
Fond eyes to his, he read the sweet response.

By his strong arms encircled tenderly,
Her head upon his breast, she wept for joy;
And speaking through her tears: "Oh, leave me not,
But let me share your lot whate'er it be—
A palace or a cot—I would leave all
The world, my Cedric, dear, and go with thee."
But Cedric kindly told her of the place,
Its roughness, the peons there; and frankly,
But perhaps unwise, he spoke of dangers
From the wild bandits. It was no place for
One so sweet and gentle as his own dear
Lola; it were better she obey her
Father's call. That day, a week, the ship that
He expected her to take, would leave that
Port. It would not be long; he would stop there
On his way and see her father, speak to
Him, as man to man should speak, all fair and
honorable. The wisdom of his speech
She saw and cheerful yielded to his will.
With fervid kiss their pledges sealed, they sat
In sweet converse till lengthening shadows called;
Then spread their sail and shoreward set the prow
Of their light craft. With rosy finger tips
She swept the strings of her guitar and sang:

"What fairy-like music steals over the sea,
Entrancing the senses with calm melody ?
'Tis the voice of the mermaid as she floats o'er the main,
And mingles her notes with the gondolier's strain."

Homer and his sister, waiting at the
Mooring, by their merry laughter and love
Glances, half concealed, each read their secret ;
And reading, saw the fading shadows of
Their hope. Each concealed the pang ; and laughing,
Teased the truants for their tardiness. Then
Timidly the lovers made confession.
"And we will pray," said Homer, "that to you
Be given the fullness of all earthly
Joy, and then the sweetest bliss of heaven."

Lola left them ; and the three in silence
Watched her waving from the deck ; and saw the
Good ship fading in the offing vanish,
Where bending skies come down to meet the sea ;
Then sadly turned away—each heart, wounded
By a shaft from Cupid's bow ; arrows from
His quiver, unaimed, oftentimes fly amiss.

Too high born and proud were Dora Lee
And Homer to harbor in their minds dark

Jealousies, or thoughts unkind; but Homer
Was disconsolate; and Dora, cheering,
Said: "You surely will forget your grief; and
Going back to your first love will marry
Her and love her evermore; for no true
Heart can ever love but one. So it was
Her prophecy came true. Dora loved with
Woman's constancy; and womanlike found
Comfort in the secret hope (while wishing
Naught but good for Lola Vail), the idle hope
That she one day would marry Cedric Vaughn.

If in the spirit world departed ones
Can see with joy a loved one plodding on,
And faithful to the end, achieve at last
The worthy object sought, then there was joy
Above when Cedric led the class and gained
The highest meed of praise for work well done.

Cedric saw, or tho't he saw, a shorter
Way to competence than any of the
Kindly offers of a place which, without
His asking, came to him; a great law firm
Wanted him; a professorship in that

Same college he could have; in the counting
House and busy marts of commerce there were
Many op'nings for one as he so well
Endowed and popular. He declined them
All; and yet so gracefully, with thanks, that
They were urged upon him all the more; but
He had fixed his mind on going back, see
Lola on his way, then hasten on to
Carry out his plans; for each hour improved
Would bring them nearer to their wedding day.

On the morn of his departure, a throng
Of gay young friends came, bearing tokens of
Their friendship, souvenirs of college days,
And bidding him God-speed upon his way.
He keenly felt the sting of parting with
His friends; but when he came to say good-bye
To Homer, that was hardest of it all.
When Dora gave the parting hand, and in
Her large blue eyes he saw the gathering
Tears, that tell-tale look of love she fain would
Hide; that yearning look of hopeless love
Like arrow pierced his soul with deep regret,
And haunted him thro' all the coming years.

THE VOYAGE.

With varying winds the good ship sailed thro'
Summer sea. At times translucent clouds were
Flung across its way like twilight mists, and
Then anon the sun burst forth. With lowering
Winds and listless sail they drifted dreamily
Beneath the turquoise skies. When at night the
Mellow moonlight made its path across the
Waves, Cedric paced the deck impatiently;
And in his restless dreams he saw the face
And form of Lola; felt her soft breath on
His cheek, her arms entwined about his neck
In heavenly bliss.

At some port discharging
Freightage, the ship would often linger for
A day, and those on board would wander thro'
The town. Once they saw a vessel that plied
Between that southern coast and Africa
Unload its cargo—human souls, who had
Been stolen from their home and brought to this
Free country to be sold to servitude.
The buyers, richly dressed and bedecked with
Diamonds, stood like drovers waiting at the

Cattle pens to buy. One gentleman with
Pistol at his belt, true type of southern
Cavalier, took a mother from her child;
Cedric pled with him to buy the baby
Too. He was answered by an insult, and
Derided for his pity for "the brat."
Unmindful of the insult to himself,
He persevered and gained consent to buy
The child and place it in its mother's arms.

Off the south-most coast they saw the isle,
The magic isle of Bimini, where the
Indian sages told De Leon he
Would find the fountain of eternal youth.
Thence onward thro' the gulf, and near that quaint
Old Crescent City, he found his darling
Lola. Near the city in a lovely
Urban villa on the rich plantation
Of her father, where the oleanders
Bloom, and palmettos wave their fronded plumes,
They met once more. Her father, Colonel Vail,
Was absent; would return in one week more.
Six days, six blissful days, from early morn
Till eve, the lovers wandered 'mid the scenes

To her, so rich in hallowed memories.

Sitting by her mother's grave, she told him
How unlike the days of old she found her
Home. Her father, with advancing age and
Growing wealth, had changed; become more like the
One who filled her mother's place, purse-proud and
Haughty. He had hinted at a union
That he desired for her, and she feared he
Would not look with favor on her Cedric.

Like as the vine twines with the sturdy oak
And clings the stronger when the north wind blows,
So she, as moved by some foreboding, clung
To him, and begged that she might go with him
To that far land; and coaxingly she said:
"Who will spread the table for my Cedric?
Or smooth his pillow? Or if mishap befall,
Nurse him back to health? If he goes alone,
I ne'er shall look upon his face again."

He kissed away her tears and playfully
Made light of her misgiving; yet he was
Sorely tempted, and well-nigh gave way to

His desire; but that high sense of honor,
And solicitude for her, gave him the
Mastery over self. And from that hour
He never knew a thought of selfishness.
He soothed her fears; and by words of wisdom,
(As before) soon brought her judgment into
Sweet accord with his. But it was agreed
That if her father answered his request
With scorn, or treated him unkindly, there
Would be no angry words. That he would go
And never ask again. When he returned,
Would take her as his rightful own; and then
He held her to his breast, and laid upon
Her lips what they both well knew might be his
Farewell kiss. For even then they saw her
Father's carriage coming up the drive. When
They met and she presented her betrothed,
Cedric recognized the man who bought the
Slave and would have torn the infant from its
Mother's breast. Yet, speaking calmly, told him
Who he was, whence and why he came; told all
Manfully; and the Colonel heard him thro'.

Then, with derisive laugh, he taunted him

For his presumption: "A pauper, begging
For a queen! Nay, nay! The one who gains my
Daughter's hand must have a bank account or
Property in land or slaves." The hot blood
Rushing to his brow, he boldly answered:
"I go, accepting these conditions, but
Surely will return." Then, taking Lola's
Hand, said cheerfully: "'Till then, good-bye." With
Tearless eyes she proudly looked upon her
Cedric, and stood as strong and brave as he.

THE MINES.

When Cedric reached that country where precious
Metals and bright gems, by nature's cunning
Hand are tucked away and hidden in the
Rocks or scattered in the sands, he found a
Dusky peon—Jose Morales—whom he
Had known and trusted, and took him with his
Train of donkeys packed with stores; with miner's
Pick and spade and crucible, he bravely
Plunged into the wilderness. For many
Long and weary days he sought among the
Dry Lomitas, sought in vain beneath a

Tropic sun, lured on by prospects that proved
Valueless. And when at last he found a
Vein of quartz that sparkled with the golden
Grains, he was compelled to leave it there, to
Wait thro' long decades for other hands to
Come with stamp and chemicals to crush the
Rock and bear away the millions he had
Found. He working, saw the months pass by, but
Labored on with Lola ever in his
Mind. Anon there crept before his sight
A vision of that peaceful shore where first
They met,—a cottage home—his Lola with
A blue-eyed baby kneeling by her side,
White robed, with golden curls, in attitude
Of prayer—that evening prayer by mother taught;
Then he saw the blessings of the simpler,
Holy life; saw that wealth is least of all.

One day Morales in quest of water
Sent, returned in great excitement, crying
"Oro grande, senor! Oro grande!"
In a deep arroyo in the sands for
Ages washed by floods from mountain storm,
Jose had discovered as he said, "much

Gold." In cup-like hollows of the rocks by
Falling waters worn away—in yellow
Nuggets buried in the sand—he found the
Glittering fortune they so long had sought.
This he changed for currency of lighter
Weight and coin, in that old city where his
Forebears died; then to the seaport sped, there
Impatient waited for the ship to come
And carry him in triumph to his bride.

BEN RUBIDEAUX.

The consul, seeking Cedric, told him he
Had sent a messenger in search of him
With letters, and gave him one from Lola,
Requesting that the messenger be sent.
Cedric sent Morales to intercept
The messenger and bring the letters back.
This the faithful fellow did, and Cedric
Read them with dismay. Morales saw the
Troubled look on Cedric's face and begged to
Go with him. With his tamales, and his
Mascal, and being Cedric's servant, he
Was satisfied. He cared not for his share;

Would leave it all with him. Cedric, with real
Affection, grateful for his faithfulness,
Told him he might go and evermore abide
With him.

He read the letters o'er and
O'er with sinking heart, read Lola's letters.
Beginning at the first, he read how proud
Of him she was when he "so grandly stood
Before her father, with the bearing of
A king, and faced him in his wrath;" then of
Her sad and lonely days when he was gone;
How her father sought by gentleness to
Mould her to his will and bring her to forget
The one she loved. Of the attention paid
By Simon Blake, her father's friend and boon
Companion, the man he wanted her to
Wed,—a vile, besotted wretch who knew no
God but gold; she hated gold and wished that
He might come back poor in all but love and
Purity of soul, with which no other
Riches can compare.

This man had urged his
Suit until she had exhausted all the
Harmless arts of womanhood to evade
His coarse advances, praying daily that
Her Cedric would return; when he boldly
Claimed her hand, she told him, "No;" he bro't her
Father who commanded that she wed him;
She, helpless in their hands, had pled for time—
One more year; then, if Cedric had not come,
Her answer they should have. One day she, in
An arbor half hidden in the trellis,
Had heard her father's overseer, Ben
Rubideaux, and Simon Blake make bargain
That for a sum the overseer would watch
For Cedric and murder him if he should
Come. She knew he did not fear them all, but
For her sake, she begged him not to venture
There. She gave a number in the city
Where he would find a friend, a lady friend,
Of hers. It was arranged that she should come
For her. Then, as his lawful wife, he could
Defend her and himself, if needs must be.
'Twere best that he should come with pistols, armed;
Ben Rubideaux and Blake were desperate

And wicked men. She wrote, fearing lest her
Letters would not be received; since he left,
She had received no word from him; she knew
That he would write, but they had come between.

THE WEDDING.

This plan was not to Cedric's liking for
He would fain have gone openly and claimed
His bride, but for her sake he acquiesced,
And in his servant's name he took a house,
A lovely house, in quiet place apart.
There Lola came, and as the light of slow
Descending sun proclaimed the dying day,
And zephyrs laden with the breath of bloom
And tuneful with the song of mocking bird,
Were wafted from the sea, then from the mission
Came the parish priest, and in soft accents
Of the Spanish tongue, pronounced the holy
Words that made them one. No other witness
Than his servant and her friend. And there thro'
Long and dreamy, blissful days, they passed their
Honeymoon.

Morales, with his native
Instinct, saw that danger hovered over
Cedric; and, unknown to him, he shadowed
All his steps. One night a messenger in
Haste came to the door, told Cedric that his
Servant was in trouble, needed him; he
Went, not knowing that his faithful Jose
Shadowed them. When near the water front the
Stranger fled; and from the cotton bales and
Freightage piled upon the dock, two ruffians
Sprang on Cedric. When the light of morning
Dawned, the lifeless forms of Simon Blake, Ben
Rubideaux and poor Morales were found
Lying on the bloody dock.

All night Lola
Paced the floor in anguish, list'ning for the
Footsteps that came not. Nor knew she of the
Tragedy until she read: "Murdered! In the
Night! Two citizens of high repute shot down!
But not until one of the murderers
(A bearded foreigner) was killed by them.
The other has escaped, but the mob is
On his track and he will soon be taken."

The paper gave a good description of
Her husband, which she doubted not, was given
By the man who called for him. If she should
Speak, it would bring harm to Cedric; he might
Escape and come to her; so, taking hope,
With one trusty servant she in hiding
Waited there. Her friend had gone and no one
Knew of her abiding place.

The weary

Weeks and months rolled by; she pined, and passing
Near the gates of death, awoke to find a
Blue-eyed baby by her side—the child of
Cedric's dreams. The months passed by and still
No word from Cedric came. She, yielding to
Her grief and drooping, faded as a flower
That withering in decadence fades away.
The rosy seraph sent—so kindly sent—
From heaven to be the precious idol of
Her solitude, and his, grew strong and more
Angelic as the passing days went by.

When the ruffians from the darkness sprang on
Cedric, with ready shot, the foremost fell;

But the bludgeon of the other laid him
Low; then, as the fatal blow was falling,
Morales coming, threw himself between;
And in deadly combat grappled with Ben
Rubideaux. With bowie knives they struggled,
Each receiving fatal thrusts, nor yielded
Until weak from loss of blood, they parting
Fell; Morales' bowie buried in the
Heart of Rubideaux. Cedric lay for hours,
Unconscious; then, his strength returning, he
Rose, and dazed, bewildered, groped along the
Frontage, stag'ring like a drunken man; the
Stevedores thought him one returning from a
Night's debauch. He in the early morning,
Came where a boat was loosening its cables
From the wharf; and unnoticed, stumbled on
And fell among the luggage in a swoon.

THE MYSTIC TOKEN.

The boat—bound for the Indies—was well out
On the gulf before they found and lifted
Him; nor knew they of the tragedy upon
The dock, or that he was hunted as a

Murderer. They finding on his person
The token of a craft which they reveréd,
They cared for him and left him safely in
An island city of the Southern Sea.
There his brother craftsmen gathering round him,
Nursing—raised him—raised him as one from the
Dead. From the “Valley of the Shadows” brought
Him forth to perfect health and vigor; but
Alas! the silken cord that erstwhile bound
Him to the past, was broken! *Memory*
Was gone! Nor, with active mind and clear, could
He recall the past, tell his name or whence
He came. He strove to lift the veil and look
Beyond the wall of night that intervened.
That cruel blow had caused a lesion of
The brain—a lapse of memory complete.
As the wire that bears the hidden current
Broken, swaying in the breeze, connecting
Sends a gleam across the night, so at times
Bright gleams of memory, almost taking
Shape, would light his way; then leaving him in
Greater darkness, would as quickly fly away.

Gradually came before his sight, as
Dimly seen thro' nebulae, the outlines
Of a form and face came from the misty
Moonlight of the past. At last, came back to
Him, that picture which had made the deepest
Imprint on his mind—his Lola, as he
Saw her standing by her father's side. But
When was this? And where? And who was she?
By exercise of all the strength of his
Great will, her name once more came back to him,
And then her father's; then the city where
They lived; and then it was borne in on him
That she was his betrothed; that he had gone
To that fair isle to make a home for her.
Now, having gained the wherewithal, he could
Go and bring her. With this thought, the flame of
Love rekindled blazed anew, as clearly
He remembered those six happy days of
Love with her—what she said, his promises;
And now—his hot blood leaping to the call,
He hastened on his way. Arriving there,
He straightway went to find her father's
Home and claim her as he swore to do the
Day he left her there. The Colonel met him

With a scornful smile and said: "So you have Come? You may have her, if you wish for such As she." Breaking forth in rage, he cried—with Oaths—"Go! Find her at the hospital"—he Told the driver where—"Go! Find her with her Child of shame; they are good enough for you! I care not if she fills a harlot's grave."

THE STOLEN CHILD.

Cedric, smitten almost to the death, bade The driver go with haste. He found her and She, smiling, whispered low: "My Cedric, you Have come to meet me. Is this heaven?" then placed The baby hand in his and falling back, She was *indeed in heaven*. Cedric, tearless, For a moment stood as one struck dumb; then Took the baby in his arms. She too young To understand, or lisp her mother's name Or his, as though instinctively, she threw Her rosy arms about his neck and kissed Him. Then confiding, laid her golden curls Upon his breast. The nurses, thinking him



A base deserter, hoping he at least
Would own the child, and seeing him caress
It—placed tenderly its costly wrappings
'Round, and quickly packed its ample clothing,
Gave it him. He kissed the marble brow and
Turning to the one who had the right to
Speak for all, he inquired about the rites
And ceremonies of her faith, "Were they
Performed?" "Yes," the matron said, "the good priest
Has been often by her side, left her just
Before you came; the one who married her."

He paced the hall and pondered, mystified.
What he had heard and seen had set his brain
Awhirl. So she was married! Then to whom?
Her husband might at any moment come
And claim his child—claim Lola's child—he quick
Resolved to take the babe and give his life
To her—to care for her, for Lola's sake;
For she was Lola's child, if not his own.
They must not know that he was not the one
Who married her. He must not see the priest.
He, in his frenzy, cast aside all thought
Of right or wrong—decided he would

Steal—yea, lie or even die before that
One who had deserted her should have her
Child. He gave them gold, and speaking calmly,
(Falsely, too, as he supposed) said: "Tell them
Her husband ordered that her last resting
Place shall be a mausoleum grand, and
To him you gave the child—the one to whom
It rightfully belongs; say that he loved
Her to the last, and would that he had died;
That she had mourned for him—not he for her."
Then, with a farewell kiss, he took the child,
Believing he was stealing it away.
The baby clung to him and was content.

But for the child his life had ended there;
Then there had been no tie to bind, no one
To love. The past almost a blank, and in
The future no alluring hope, he fain
Had snap'd the slender thread of life, to be
With Lola evermore. Or, had he been
One of the weaker kind, complaining at
His fate, he had perchance by slower
Process, ended all in low debauchery.

THE WANDERERS.

But those confiding arms, that baby kiss
Upon his cheek, sent thro' the aisles of his
Great, generous heart, a flood of newborn
Love. To part with her would be indeed to
Part with life itself. He, thinking quickly
And as quickly acting, fled—took the first
Ship that sailed, nor asking whither it was
Bound; rejoicing when it cleared the dock and
Seaward turned its prow. When learning that its
Course lay to the north, he changed to one bound
For the South Sea Isles.

Sailing to and fro,
The changing seasons passed while they upon
The ocean cruised like wanderers without
A guide; he thinking only of his charge,
And where he, in her tender years, the
Best could care for her. Willing hands he found—
Mothers' hands outstretched to take the cherub
From his arms. She, growing, Cedric saw in
Her the image of her mother—the same
Blue eyes and wavy hair which fell about
Her shoulders; high arching brows and lashes

Long but darker shaded, like his own. He
Had thought to call her Lola; but when the
Stranger asked her name, she lisping answered,
"Zola," he left it so.

Tho' long before

The day when ox-carts plowed their dusty way
Across the plains to reach the sun land slopes,
The Eldorado of the west, he knew
Of that fair land beside the sunset sea—
That sunny, southern California.
There they would go, where none would ever hear
The story of the stolen, nameless child;
And where the recreant father ne'er would
Come. There would he seek and find in sylvan
Quietude, the sweetest spot where Mother
Nature reigns and in her lap, among the
Birds and flowers, would she be reared in spotless
Purity—educated—taught by him—
As wise men of the olden times received
Their learning from the doctors of the law.

Thitherward they sailed; and thro' the rocky
Gateways of the cape—tho' roughly shaken—

Safely passed; then to the north thro' calmer
Waters, borne by Etesian winds, oft-times
Delayed by traffic at the ports, or on
A glassy sea becalmed. And once their ship
Was overtaken by an ugly craft
That bore the pirates' flag; and every man
On board was called to arms; then they were
Well nigh overwhelmed and taken. Cedric,
Joining with the crew, fought valiantly. Thro'
The thickest of the battle, Zola clung
To him. When they would have taken her below,
She cried, "Let me stay wiz papa; if he
Go, zen me go too." Cedric answered, "Be
It so; we live or die together." But
Their fears were turned to great rejoicing when
A shot crashed thro' the pirate craft. They sailed
Away and left it sinking in the deep.

Cedric, by his bravery and coolness
In the time of danger, won respect and
Friendship of officers and crew. When they
Left him at the mission of the holy
Padres, on the bay of San Diego,
Loaded him with costly presents, forced them

On him, presents for himself and Zola.
The angelic child had won the hearts of all.

Cedric told the good Franciscan fathers
He was going northward overland, and
Joyously he set about preparing
For the journey, she ever at his side,
With childish prattle, asking, "What is zis?"
"What is zat?" and "What for?" He answering
Cheerfully and evermore explaining—
Teaching her.

In her sweet companionship
And the certainty of keeping her, he
Laid aside his sadness and became as
Light of heart and happy as herself. At
Last they were all ready to begin their
Wild and free nomadic life—a dozen
Gentle burros, packed with all that they might
Need for months to come; a tent with costly
Furs and rugs, and blankets of bright colors
Bo't from the Indians, with toys and gaudy
Trinkets; a snow-white pony, showily
Equip'd with Spanish bit and bridle,

Upon its back a basket, sedan-like,
With crimson canopy, lined with softest
Silken draperies, for his "Gypsy queen."
A princess of the Romany was ne'er
Provided with such luxuries as she.

In the early morning, long before the
Ringing of the mission bells, Zola and
Her strange retinue set forth; the pony,
With its precious burden, led by Cedric's
Hand; then came the white milk goats with tinkling
Bells; to the sound, the meek-faced burros, trained
To follow, trailed patiently behind; and
Then a faithful shepherd dog to keep them
All in line. They moved by easy stages,
Stopping often in some shady dell to
Rest and let their burros feed upon the
Grassy slopes. Then would Zola gather flowers,
Or chase the yellow butterflies, with shouts
Of childish glee that echoed thro' the glen;
To him a sweeter music than the chime
Of great cathedral bells or orchestra.

IN THE MOUNTAINS.

They exploring, crossed the great Cuyamaca Range, traversed its broad plateaus, and thro' the Silence of its lofty domes and canyons; Then beyond, where boiling waters gurgling Flowed thro' Indian villages. They saw The waving pines upon the lofty crest Of Palomar; and wandering, vainly sought Along its base for passage leading to Its heights. They often reached an eminence, And thought they neared the goal, when overhanging Walls of granite turned them back. At last, by Persevering, came upon its table-Lands; and pressing forward found the place he Long had pictured in his mind—the sheltering Boughs of giant trees, the gushing fountain, Level plot of fertile land below, well Watered by the rivulets that trickled From the springs. Here he sowed the garden seeds And grain; and from the chaparral he bro't The antlered buck and lesser game. The sweets The toiling honey bee had stored away, Drip'd from the boles of sycamore and oak. They happy lived in Nature's luxury.

Lest in their quietude he might become
Indifferent or wasteful of the time,
He took up an ancient system which they
Faithfully observed thro' all their years of
Hermitage—eight hours for labor, eight for
Rest, and eight for study and improvement
Of his mind, and teaching Zola.

He was
The builder of the hidden cabin; for
Zola it was builded, for her boudoir.
With loving hands, he axe and auger plied,
Without compass, square or trestle board,
But with all the tenderness that ever
Mother bird provided for her nestling.
He building, furnished it with draperies—
Bright Indian blankets, rugs and robes of
Fur, arranging all as beautiful as
Tho' her mother's spirit hands had guided
His. Perchance they did. If love be spirit,
And spirit love—or soul—then such as hers
Might overleap the balustrades of
Heaven and find its own; or such unselfish
Soul as his might rise and view the palace

Of the skies. He teaching, opened first the
Book of Nature, and strolled with her among
The flowers and botanized. Then to the rocks;
He told her of the slow formations of
The ages. From the books selected in
The days when she was cradled on the sea,
He, in learning, carried her beyond her
Years.

“PEG LEG, THE MINER.”

They marked the changing moons until a
Score had glided by and yet had seen no
Other human face save one—and he, an
Honest miner whom they found in sorry
Plight, with broken limb, where he had fallen
From an overhanging ledge. They succored
Him until, returned to strength, he rose with
One limb twisted hopelessly. They made—as
Best they could—a wooden substitute, and
Strap'd with buckskin bandage, he soon learned to
Use it cleverly. Jokingly, he called
Himself “Peg-leg, the miner.” He told them
Of a mine that out upon the desert
He had found, where three large buttes stood side by

Side. Cedric gave him burros from his herd,
And packs, and sent him on his way. He came
Again with well-filled sacks of pellets round
As shot and black as ebony, which proved
To be pure gold. He left it there, and leaving,
Nevermore returned. Miners to this day
In vain have sought that "Peg-leg Mine," and those
Three buttes; and some have left their bones to bleach
Upon the desert sand. The miner told
Them of a nearer passage, a hidden
Trail, that led downward to the valley. They
Going, tarried there and Cedric sent the
Indians to the mission for supplies.

Once a cougar sprang across their path with
Blazing eyes and crouching for a spring; when
Cedric sent a bullet thro' its brain; and
From its den he took a pair of baby
Mountain lions, made orphans by the shot.
Zola, pitying, took them home and one,
Surviving, grew to monstrous size, became
Obedient to her command, and like
A faithful watch dog, followed her. She
Called him Zimbo. Other pets she had—white

Kids of silken fleece, birds and animals,
But Zimbo was the monarch of them all.

As the circling years went 'round and she could
See beyond the golden morning of her
Sunny life the ripening noonday coming
On, she longed to see the world beyond her
Mountain home; but named it not to Cedric.
With her years she grew more fearless, wild and
Venturesome. With Zimbo and her rifle,
She scaled the dizzy heights of rock and crag
Where condors built their nests, and knew the
Devious windings of the wild doe's trail,
Thro' manzanita groves and chaparral.
In a seat of granite, nature fashioned,
Like a throne, shaded by a giant oak
Upon a summit looking oceanward,
She would sit in dreamy mood and watch the
Silvery line of surf that fringed the far-off
Fading stretch of blue. Once she saw a sail
Appear, then slowly vanish in the offing;
And in the quiet of an early morn,
She heard the low sweet chime of mission bells.

GILBERT.

To that same port where Cedric landed with
His Zola, others came from distant parts.
Some came to seek their fortunes, others came
To buy and till the soil, some to obey
The inborn instinct of the pioneer.
One family, leaving all behind, had bro't
A sickly child. Rich and prosperous they
Had been, and with children blessed; but a dread
Contagion had swept them all away save
One; and he, left delicate and frail, the
Idol of their hopes—no other left to
Keep the family name. From those who best could
Speak, they learned there was no hope unless it be
In taking him to that fair, sunny clime.
They hastened there and gave him for his home
A quaint old hacienda of the Dons;
With many leagues of land that lay between
The mountains and the sea. There amid the
Orange groves and vineyards, in the freedom
Of the range where roamed his father's flocks and
Herds, young Gilbert soon became a gay young
Caballero—grew as strong and fearless
As vaqueros of the range—could twirl the
Lariat or aim the rifle true as they.

Sunburned, strong and handsome was Gilbert, in
Showy costume of the Dons, with clanking
Spurs, gold-mounted trappings on his coal-black
Leo, ambling thro' the massive arches
Of the mission. Senoritas smiled on
Him; he returned their loving glances. This
His parents seeing, feared their Anglo
Blood be mixed with that of darker hue, besought
Him to return to their old home and there
To find a bride of his own faith and kind.
He quieted their fears and said that he
Was wedded to the mesa and the hills.
He loved the mountains more than ever
Bridegroom loved his bride, his heart was free;
But kind and true and dutiful to them,
He promised solemnly that he would do
As they desired before he took a wife;
For ne'er could he repay the love and care
By them bestowed on him, their sacrifice.

Foremost in all manly sports, he reckless
Rode along the beach where foaming breakers
Lashed the cliffs, fleet-footed Leo dashed between.
His black horse was known on El Camino
Real—far beyond the shady groves of

Monte Vista. He loved the mountains
And on their bosom laid his head beneath
The starlit skies, companion of their silence,
Partaker of their rest. In midnight darkness
Could he thread the winding Indian trail
Across the high Cuyamacas, and often
Had he reached the base of Palomar, and
Longed to see beyond its frowning granite
Walls. At last, undaunted, came nearly to
The summit—came where a deep-walled canyon held
Him back, there rested. The autumn sun was
Slowly sinking to the sea and bathed the
Mountain side in flood of rosy-tinted
Brilliancy.

ZOLA AND ZIMBO.

Upon a shelving rock near
By, a being of angelic beauty
Stood; posed statue-like, her eyes fix't on the
Distant sea; one hand spread gracefully
Across her brow, the other holding back
A monster mountain lion that crouching
At her feet, lay watching him; a robe of

Softest fabric, yielding to the breeze, revealed
The ample fulness of her shapely form;
Caught back by strand of sparkling gems, a mass
Of golden hair fell nearly to her feet.
She unconscious of his presence, Gilbert
Stood in speechless adoration, as one
Entranced,—lost in wonderment. Who was this
Personage divine? This apparition
Come to him on that lone mountain side? Was
She some fairy elf come to bewitch him?
Some mountain sprite? Or angel from the throne?
With throbbing temples, arms outstretched, as tho'
He fain would leap the chasm that lay between,
Pressed slowly to its edge. The lion rising
Angrily to spring, she saw him standing
There and vanished from his sight. Then from the
Rocks, he heard her voice call softly, sternly:
“Come, Zimbo, come! *Come here!*” The spell was
Broken; by those words in his own tongue
He knew that she was of the earth—one like
Himself—and not a native of that land.

Day after day did he return to that
Same spot and, waiting patient, watch for her;

Once for a moment saw her on the heights,
And again, he saw the eyes of that great
Lion fixed on him and knew that she was
Near. Like knight of old he scaled the highest
Peaks and stood upon the spot her feet had
Pressed. With throbbing pulse and palpitating
Heart he followed in pursuit. The kindly
Rocks revealed no tell-tale foot prints where her
Feet had touched them in her flight. The summer
Wore away and autumn came again; yet
She cunningly evaded him. Growing
Desperate, he traversed all the length and
Breadth of Palomar; at times he heard her
Voice in song, heard her speak to Zimbo, she
Near him; for a precious moment saw her,
But in finesse she more than equalled him.

Gilbert's parents missed his merry laugh and
Jest; marvelled at his absence; feared that
He was ill and questioned him. He told them
He was hunting in the mountains, but he
Mentioned not the object of his quest; misled
Them by tales of condor's nest and mountain
Lion he had seen.

Likewise was Cedric
Troubled by the change he saw in Zola.
She loved Gilbert—loved him wildly, madly.
She had watched him when he knew it not, and
Knew that he loved her; but frightened at the
Thought, was minded to keep the secret
Locked in her own breast and fly from him; so
Timidly she asked if some day they might
Go away, and sailing o'er the ocean
Find another home. Cedric answered, "Yes,
Some day." He had long expected this and
Unknown to her, had in a way, prepared
Her for the change. From that lone mountain top
Letters had been sent to shops and houses
Of the east, and yearly in return had
Come by Indian carriers from the port
Clothing for himself and Zola, made to
Measure sent, and always in their study
Hours they dressed resplendently, that she might
Grace a drawing-room and feel at ease—not
Show that she in wilderness was reared.
She had mastered music and languages
In travel needed most, and was withal
A finished scholar. Not for himself but

Her, he feared to take her hence—knew full well
That one so beautiful would soon be wooed,
And he had never told her of the cloud
That hung around her birth—the cloud of
Mystery. As for himself, he loved her
All the better for it—she blameless—he
In tenderness postponed the hour; but the
Longer left undone, he dreading knew that
One day it must come; in honor must he
Speak—must tell her, though it break her heart, to
Know that he was not her father. Often
Did he wish that in her childhood had he
Told her all. Yet, in his weakness, promised
Her that some day they would go: “Yes; some day.”

Gilbert, growing wise in woodcraft and in
The art of making love, on the farther
Side went up the mountain, rode Leo up
The winding trail; Zola watching, waited
Disappointed while he—galloping o’er the
Table-land—came on Cedric busy in
His garden. They with kindly greeting met,
Conversing, found each the other to his
Liking. He too manly to dissemble,

Gilbert came out openly: The one so
Coy and beautiful, was she his daughter?
Cedric troubled, sternly answered: "She is mine,
Indeed, my Zola." How learned the young man of
Her presence on the mountain? Had he met
Her? Had they met clandestinely? Gilbert,
Speaking plainly, said: Tho' strangers,
Yet they knew each other well; he long had
Worship'd her afar; well she knew and well
Had she evaded him. Now, at last, had
He found the one to ask if he might meet and
Woo her, would he give consent? Cedric saw
His good intent, sincerity and truth,
Looked upon him with the feeling of the
Father for the son. Then like a phantom
Came that secret terror of his life,—he
Spoke unlike himself—severe, unkindly.
"She obeys her father's will and he would
Will that she remain unseen, unknown
To strange intruder. The young man makes bold
In asking."

Answered Gilbert, manfully:

"May not a true heart be emboldened by

The hope of winning one so beautiful?
The asking honorable? Perchance the
Senor has himself in days gone by made
Like request?" Spoke of his family
Old and honored, lived on the Gilbert rancho
In the valley. Would he offer them rebuke
Unwittingly? Cedric by his words the
More determined they should never meet, for
Zola's sake and his, resolved to flee
With her, so spoke deceitfully. He must
Go and wait six days and on the seventh
Come; if she were there then he might speak with
Her. Gilbert said respectfully: "Tis well!
With such a hope I well may add to my
Long waiting one more week." And with a smile
Of hopefulness, he rode away. Cedric
Pitying, watched him disappear among
The ceanothus bloom and drooping boughs.

Zola coming, on her face the look of
Sadness,—signs of weeping,—Cedric knowing
Now the secret of the change in her—the
Absence of the rippling laughter noticed
In the months gone by—his kind heart melted

And well-nigh did he repent and tell her
All, tell Gilbert; but the specter haunting
Fixed his purpose; she must go or face a
Deeper sorrow. So, despite his feeling,
Smilingly and cheerful, told her they would
Go and sail across the ocean—sail to
Foreign lands. Thus seeking to beguile and
Turn her from the tie that bound her heart to
Palomar, spake he of the people and
The sights that they would see. Long had they
Remained in Nature's parlor; now going,
Would they view the halls and palaces of
Splendor they had read about. She smiling
Sadly, kissed and thanked him for his kindness.

She daily strolled where she had seen the face
Of Gilbert, vainly waiting with the hope
That he would come once more—pensively, with
Tears—and prayed that she might see him once
Again before she went away. The sun
From out its saffron-tinted bed burst forth
And kissed the mountain peaks. She weeping, heard
The matin song of birds and cooing doves,
The melody of Nature's minstrelsy—

Heard, and yet not heard, for today must she
Decide among her treasures, which to take
And which to leave behind. Came Zimbo and
Her pets for breakfast from her hand, the last
But one, for early on the morrow she
Would go. "Shall we never come again to
This dear spot?" she asked. Cedric feigning
Cheerfulness, his sadness ill-concealed,—ran
On assuringly: "Of course, we will return
And rest from our long journey 'round the world;
Come, bring your bric-a-brac, my girl, and we
Will pack it snugly in the cabin, bar
The doors and leave all safe and sound. We may
Find Zimbo and the other pets all waiting
When we come. Cheer up, my darling; dry your
Tears, for wondrous sights are waiting for those
Eyes to feast upon." Thus talking, while he
Packed her treasures in the hidden cabin.

THE MIDNIGHT RIDE.

Gilbert, sleepless, counted yet the slowly
Dragging hours—three more days, and then
The promised one; pondered o'er the words of

That strange man on Palomar,—words so oft
Repeated: “If she be here, then you may
Speak with her.” “*If she be here!*” Their meaning—
His intention—dawned upon him. “She will
Not be there!” In frantic haste he rose and
Threw his saddle on his fastest horse and
Sent the spurs along his quivering flanks;
His adolescent blood in angry throbs,
His eyes ablaze, he wildly flew across
The mesa, through the foothills, brave Bonita
Stag’ring, bore him up the trail. In early
Morning came to where he spoke with Cedric.

On the slope he saw the tethered burros,
Well-filled packs and camping equipage near
By. Then from the curtained maze of trailing
Vines and boughs, he heard the gurgling waters
Of the spring and sound of axe. Pressing thro’
He came upon the hidden cabin, Cedric
Placing bars before the door, and Zola
By his side. At sight of him came bounding
Zimbo, stop’d by Zola’s voice. Then, with head
Uncovered—bowed, as one in reverential
Attitude before a shrine—addressed her:

"We have been acquainted long, if not by
Spoken word, then by the cords that bind two
Hearts as one. This man who calls you daughter,
He may tell you of his promise—explain
The breaking—doubting not his motive, I
Believe him kind and true."

"Calls you daughter!"

Smote poor Cedric's soul; a deadly palor
Swept across his kindly face. The time had
Come when he must speak—must tell the secret
Of his life—her life. Then he recited
All that he remembered,—Zola's unknown
Parentage; his stealing her, and fear that
She be taken; how he had suffered with
The dread of making known to her that he
Was not her father. Speaking, the strong man
Breaking, wept. Her love and true devotion
Setting all aside, she sprang to him and
Clinging, cried: "*He is my own dear father!*"
Her dazzling beauty now intensified.

As one enchanted, Gilbert looked upon
The scene; such filial love revealed a depth

Of soul beyond his ken ; thought he of those
Who called him son—what they had done for him—
And of the promise he had made to them.
Yes, he would die for them; yet in their pride
Of name and family might they not spurn
This nameless one? Thus in the balance weighed
His love for her was satisfied; fortune,
Name and family were all as naught to
Him compared with Zola. He proudly asked
Again to woo the hermit's daughter and
Winning, give to her his name.

“No, no,” she
Answered for the father, “until this cloud
Is lifted—mystery solved—my name is
Zola Vaughn.” With her words, a light broke in
On Gilbert. Joyously he spoke; as he
Had promised would he go back to the states
And seek a bride, solve the mystery and
Return triumphant, claim her—his Zola—
As his bride. Would take the ship now in
The harbor, sail tomorrow. Cedric gave
The name of Colonel Vail, but his memory
Yielded meagerly of information

Needed. He well remembered all his life
Up to the day that he left Lola at
Her father's home, and *from* the day she died,
The gap between in mystery wrapt, all blank.
Gilbert, taking Cedric's hand, said: "From this
Day your life shall be a pattern for my
Own. God bless you." And to Zola: "You are
Mine whate'er my journey may reveal;" and
Unmindful of her sweet rebuke, he held
Her to his breast and kissed her. That life-long
Fear for her still haunting, Cedric followed
Him aside and whispered: "The father, if
He be found, pray name her not to him." From
The mountain top she watched him out of sight;
Then, alone on Palomar, the hermit's
Daughter wept.

When their only son went forth
To seek a bride—to keep his vow—there was
Great rejoicing at the Gilbert rancho.

GILBERT'S JOURNEY.

After journey long and wearisome, he
Reached the Crescent City and the home of
Colonel Vail. The aged man now mellowed
By weight of years, remorseful, mourning
And alone, received him kindly, answered:
"Her father's name was Simon Blake, he was
Murdered by a Mexican upon the
Dock. The child, my grandchild's name was Blake.
The man who loved my daughter came and found her
Dying. 'Twas he who took the child away,
And they were lost at sea." Gilbert had the
Story of her life—her name was Zola
Blake.

With heavy heart he homeward turned, yet
No less loyal to his Zola. With sad
Misgivings waited for the coming of
The ship—long overdue—by stormy sea
Kept back. Waiting, pondered gloomily; he
Must go and bear the tidings that would solve
The mystery of her name, but leave a
Darker shadow than before. Still would she
Refuse his name they would go away from

Palomar. They at the rancho, left so
Happily, what would he say to them? At
Last with tattered sail and broken, came
The ship. He hastening, learned that it would
Lay at anchor there yet two days more in
Mending. Hopeless, yet with strange desire to
Linger there, again he visited the
Hospital where Zola's mother died; but
As before, no voice could answer aught of
Her; yet caught a thread of hope—an aged
Priest in near-by parish *might* remember.

The father heard him,—listened eagerly;
Then in his book of records found the date
When Lola Vail and Cedric Vaughn were wed;
And the christening of her daughter—their child.
Left with him for Cedric, left by Lola,
The treasure he had brought from Mexico,
Lola's diary, presents he had given,
And a miniature of Cedric done by
Her own hand; then to the house where they were
Married and her resting place. Gilbert took
The proof to Colonel Vail and together
They rejoiced. He begged that he would bring his

Grandchild there when they were wed, and Cedric
Vaughn, that he might grasp the hand of that true
Man. Now, to Gilbert's happy heart attuned
By hope's fruition, Nature brought a new
Glad song. The bird notes rang with sweeter
Melody—sunshine brighter—bluer skies—
Even in the tumbling troughs of ocean's
Depth, he read the mirrored light of love and
Joy. Thro' long and dreary days beneath a
Tropic sun,—in calm, or fog, or buffeted
By winds adverse, the good ship sped 'til thro'
The mild Pacific's purple haze, Point
Loma came in view and then, across the
Mesa, to the hacienda, *home again*.

With mysterious air, and teasing told,
Or partly told the story. Yes; he had
Found a fairy queen and when again the
Great round moon came o'er the mountain top, she,
Riding on its silvery beams, would come in
State,—would come with him—come to the rancho.
They must “bide-a-wee” and trusting him, wait
Patiently. So he left them wondering.

CONCLUSION.

To Palomar he flew—told all that he
Had learned—laid the proof before them—described
The house where Cedric lived—told of the battle on
The dock—how Morales died—the bags of
Gold from Mexico. Thus aided, Cedric
Woke as from a dream, remembered all; then
Placing Zola's hand in his, withdrew to
Be alone with sacred memories.

Hand

In hand the lovers blissful roved among
The crags and overhanging boughs where she
Had watched unseen, for him. Led him thro' the
Brake, in forest solitudes, where lemon
Lilies nestling grow, and clinging vines
And nodding ceanothus plumes bedrape
The foliage in Nature's millinery.

With love and kisses roamed until the day
When proudly and triumphant, Gilbert led
Them thro' the avenues of spreading palms and
Vine-clad arches of the hacienda.
His mother welcomed her with tears of joy,

"Her daughter"—then met the fathers—met in
Glad surprise—for Cedric Vaughn and Homer
Lee stood face to face; again renewed the
Old time bonds of love and friendship made the
Stronger.

Then came another presence on
The scene. Radiant in the ripened bloom
Of womanhood—as beautiful as in
The happy days of old—came Dora Lee
To welcome Cedric Vaughn and Lola's child.

On the Gilbert rancho (named for him), in the
Dreamy quiet of a summer eve, while
Softly chimed the distant mission bells,
At the hacienda, sweet Zola Vaughn
And Gilbert Lee were wed. And when the
Autumn came, and vine, and bough and field gave
Forth their richest fruitage, and falling leaves
Betokened ripeness—the sure reward
Of patient waiting—two faithful souls were
Joined as one. Again rang forth the silvery
Chime of wedding bells—old mission bells—that
Echoed from the gilded cross above its

**Hoary walls, a benediction sweet as
Incense from its altars.**

**Long, long ago
Back to the happy scenes of youth they sailed,
And left the hidden cabin to decay.**



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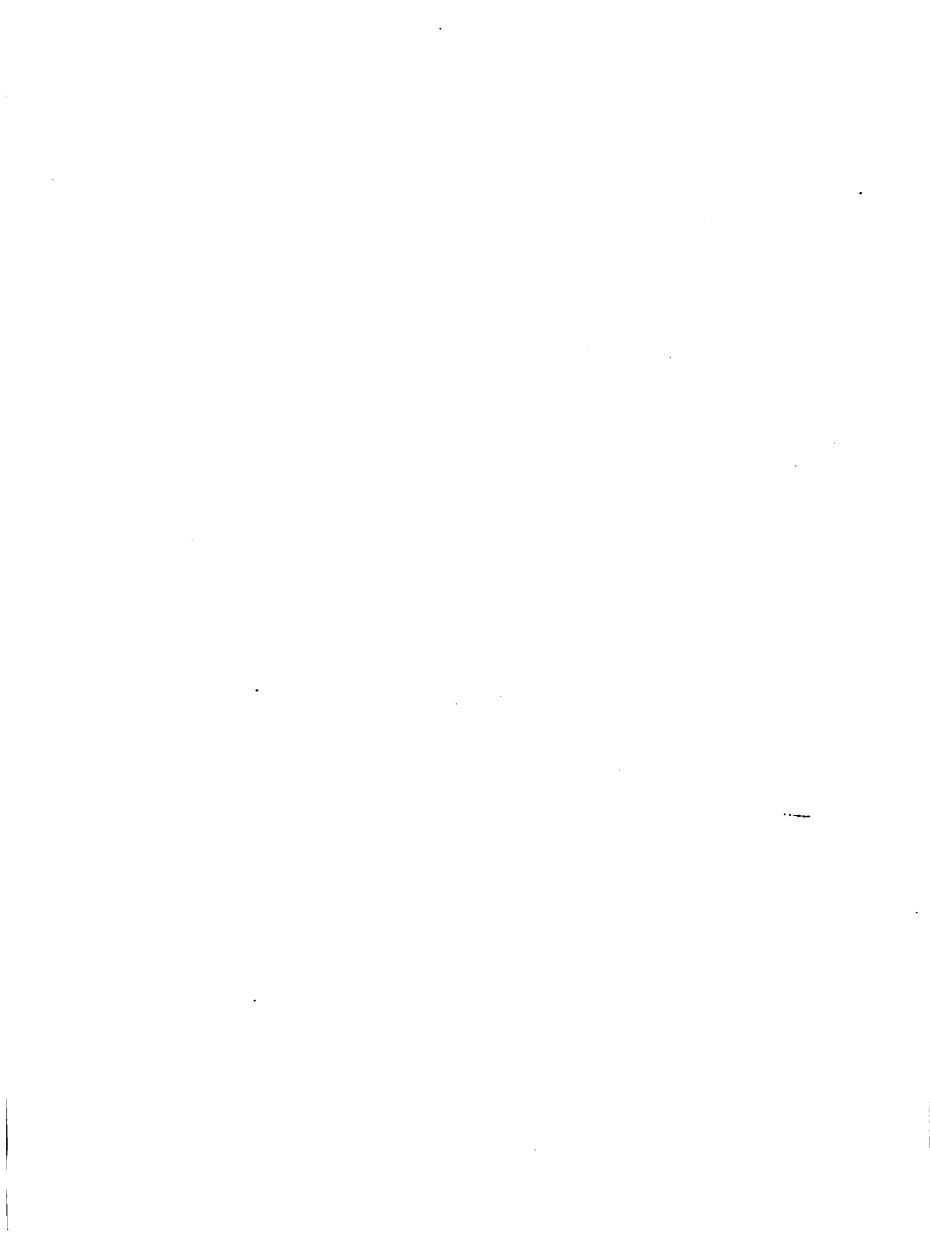
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